

Girls Only

Preparing for Marriage

Additional Project Ideas

Take a trip. Take the girls to a jeweler for a lesson on gemstone and fine metal purity. Call ahead and ask if someone would be available to talk to the girls about the importance of purity and clarity in gemstones. While you're there, let the girls look at wedding and engagement rings. Talk to the girls about the importance of maintaining purity and the special bond of marriage.

Practice date. Have the girls each go on a date with a dad, older brother, uncle, grandfather, or other positive male influence. Talk to parents or send a letter home to organize the date, so the girl doesn't have to ask anyone out, but can experience being asked out by her "dad." Make sure the "dad" takes the girl out somewhere special and talk about how a date/husband should treat her.

Daydream. Have the girls write out an essay or narrative about their dream date. Have them think about where they'd like to go, what they'd like to do, who pays, how the date treats her, how the night will end, and what he's like. Have the girls share their dream date with an accountability partner. If you have time, plan a mock wedding. Have the girls choose a cake, flowers, color scheme, pick out dresses, and come up with ideas to make the day special.

Ask around. Have the girls interview several mature, Christian couples about their dating and marriage experiences. Encourage the girls to ask about how they met, their first date, what they did right in their dating relationship, and what they could have done better. Have girls ask about the realities of marriage including the ups and downs and what it means to love each other and stay committed. Have each girl share what she learned or found the most interesting.

Collect evidence. Have the girls compile a list of "worst date or wedding" stories from the women around them. This will definitely be good for a few laughs!

Research it. Have the girls research the history of dating etiquette. Take the girls to the library and look up archived magazines and articles. Have the girls discuss the difference between dating and wedding styles in different eras and dating and getting married today and what we can learn from older traditions.

Invite a guest. Invite a trusted male speaker (or panel of speakers) in to talk about what guys' intentions are in dating and what girls need to know before they start dating. It might be good to invite a youth pastor, senior pastor, and men from a variety of ages to talk to the girls.

Budget it. Have the girls research a career they're interested in. Help them find average salaries for the your area, and help the girls create a budget based on the average salary for their career of choice. Make sure the girls include tithe, rental/mortgage payments, utilities, car payment/insurance, grocery money, cell phone costs, school loan payments, etc. What sounds like a lot of money in the beginning may not seem like as much when you factor in bills and costs of living.

Resource Ideas

- *Discovering God's Way of Handling Money* Crown Financial Ministries, 2004.
- *Money Management for Students* by Dr. Larry Burkett, Moody, 1998.
- *Don't Date Naked* by Michael & Amy Smalley, Tyndale, 2005.
- *Wisdom On...Friends, Dating, & Relationships* by Mark Matlock, Youth Specialties, 2008.
- *Technical Virginity* by Hayley DiMarco, Hungry Planet, 2006.
- *And the Bride Wore White: Seven Secrets to Sexual Purity* by Dannah Gresh, Moody, 1999.
- *Dating* by Hayley DiMarco, Hungry Planet, 2008.

Additional Discussion Questions

Discovery #1

- Is marriage meant to be permanent? Isn't that a little unrealistic today?
- What is the point of marriage? Why do you have to get married? Why isn't saying you're committed enough?
- Why is it important to have God be the center of your marriage? What happens if He's not? Can a marriage be happy if God isn't the foundation of the relationship?

Discovery #2

- How can you find the right marriage partner? What is your dream guy like? What if he's not "perfect"?
- What age is the right age to get married? How do you know if you're ready to get married?
- What are some good things about marriages in the Bible? What are some bad things?
- What is the difference between marriage in the Bible and marriage today? What are some similarities?

Discovery #3

- What does it mean to be a godly wife and mother? Who are some good examples of what it means?
- What does a Proverbs 31 woman look like today?
- Is it OK to want to stay single or not have kids? What if you choose to have a career or work in ministry as a single person? What if God calls you to be single?

Discovery #4

- What does it mean to be submissive to your husband? Is it still important to be submissive today?
- What does submission mean? Does submission have to be bad for you?
- Why is it important to choose a good husband? Why is it important to choose someone who respects you? How can you tell now if he'll be respectful later in your marriage?

Discovery #5

- Is it ever OK to marry an unbeliever?
- What does it mean for the man to be the head of the house?
- Do Christian wives still have to submit to non-Christian husbands?

Discovery #6

- What can you do right now to help prepare yourself for marriage?
- What do you want your life to look like in 10 years? How about 15? 20?
- What are some benefits of getting married? What are some benefits of waiting until you're older to get married? What are some benefits of staying single?